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ABSTRACT

The Home and School Institute has developed three plans to train teachers and administrators to work more effectively with parents and the community. The basic goals of these programs are a) to improve the skills and attitudes of participants in working with parents and the community, b) to provide parent reinforcement of children's learning, c) to build more supportive community-school relationships, and d) to design and disseminate tested materials that can be of use to other schools. The first plan consists of a three-credit course in school and parent-community involvement for teachers and administrators. Overall course requirements for participants and topics covered in the course are detailed. The second plan is for a workshop over two or three in-service days and the third for a one-day in-service workshop. The document concludes with a list of their available publications. (DDO)

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SCHOOL AND PARENT COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Designed by
THE HOME AND SCHOOL INSTITUTE
Washington, D.C.

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SCHOOL AND PARENT-COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

School system in-service career development for teachers and administrators

These programs are designed to translate into practice a growing volume of educational research which indicates the importance of the home as a major educational institution in our society.

This HSI program provides specially designed in-service training to help teachers and administrators work more effectively with parents and the community. Participant competencies to be developed and on the job evaluation of the training are built into these plans.

This type of in-service is a new dimension in teacher education. Most pre-service and in-service training for educators has offered little, if any, help in working with parents and in tapping the educational goldmine outside the school walls.

Ideally, for school systems to obtain the "most" for their in-service money, it is suggested that participants in these training sessions work in teams (probably two teachers and the principal) from each school represented. Parents are also welcome to participate, but the school team should have at least two full-time teachers on it. The team effort will help to insure school support for the work and an ongoing school approach even after the Institute training is over.

As a major part of the training, participants will develop their individual school's home community program and materials as well as widest dissemination of these training efforts. (See contents of three plans.) There is great value in having participants develop materials suited for their particular needs. The final plans for each school or system can be put into practice with on-site support, monitoring, and evaluation in conjunction with HSI staff.

THIS APPROACH, PROVIDING HOME-SCHOOL SERVICE THROUGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL IS SEEN AS A LOW COST, WHOLESALE MEANS OF ENHANCING TOTAL EDUCATIONAL QUALITY.

SOME RELEVANT FACTS: •

1) Research today continues to show that parents are the children's most important teachers-- and that not even the best school can do the job alone. Schools need parents as supplemental teachers, partners in education.

2) Community pressures are greater than ever before for parents and other taxpayers to be knowledgeable about what's happening in schools. A few parents may want direct involvement (i.e. running a school) but almost all parents are interested and asking for more information about the work of the school and how parents can help. (See attached Gallup poll

IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS FOR THE CREATIVE PARENT

- To bridge the gap between home and school
- To develop parent-teacher partnership in

indicating 80% of parents interviewed want to find out what they can do at home to improve their child in school.) School support, in the form of bond issues and budgets, is also very dependent on teachers and administrators having the ability to communicate information about the work of the school.

3) Most pre-service and in-service training of teachers and principals, have offered little, if any, help in working with parents and in tapping the educational goldmine outside the school walls. In Title I schools particularly, which this project will reach extensively, parents have tended to be more diffident and unsure about the schools. In these schools there is even greater need for teachers and administrators to have the skills and attitudes necessary to work well with the community.

4) School statistics and the wider labor market indicate that teachers currently on the job will be there for some time to come. New blood, in short, is not going to come into the system; there will be few new job openings, at least for the next several years. In-service training of currently employed teachers must increasingly be relied on as the major means of introducing innovation and effecting change. One of the changes uppermost in many peoples' minds is a new relationship between schools-parents and community.

5) Compensatory education that focuses on the child alone in school hours without the support of the home environment and community is coming up short, as registered on any number of achievement tests, from Head Start on. It is increasingly apparent that to help "disadvantaged" youngsters, in particular, and really to help all children, it is necessary to involve the home and community. Otherwise, it is money and effort down the drain. If it can be shown through this project that it is possible to deliver better, more rounded education by training teachers and administrators in how to work with the community, we will have achieved a wholesale delivery system that will be far less expensive and more efficient that the current compensatory education within school hours approach.

6) The school-parent-community field has few good materials for teacher use in the classroom thus far. One of the major goals of this program is to develop materials and plans to help teachers and administrators on the job.

BACKGROUND: This training builds upon a basic course already developed by The Home and School Institute and tested in two graduate education programs. SCHOOL AND PARENT-COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT is now established, after three semesters as a creditable program in the graduate education department of Catholic University, where it started in spring, 1972, and at Trinity College where it continues in 1972-73. It has been approved for the University of Virginia Center of Continuing Education.

PLAN A: The 3 credit hour, full semester HSI course for teachers and administrators: SCHOOL AND PARENT-COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Note: When this course is offered away from its home base in the

Washington, D.C. area, the timing can be arranged so that graduate education credits are fulfilled through variable times, mini-mesters, etc., not at the usual 2-3 hour weekly course meetings.

Overall course requirements for participants:

Readings: "How to Change the Schools," by Ellen Lurie, plus two books of participants' selection from the course bibliography. The Lurie book is a militant parents' manual, a book chosen for teacher-administrator reaction purposes, not as a gospel text.

Preparation of at least three home-school teaching activities.

Lead at least one materials critique: new materials in field or part of course books.

Case study presentation: written and then oral summary. Presentation by participant of at least one real home-school problem situation to be followed by group problem solving, brain storming session of alternative solutions.

Develop-design of home-school materials: choice to be made from various models presented in class: basic thrust is to put the school's message across. Newsletters can be included here as well as special communications to explain change in the school, etc..

Final Proposal/plan: This is the paper which will integrate parts of overall seminar into a specially designed plan for the particular school or system, marshalling resources and ideas for the school to work with home and community.

TIME FRAME: Class meetings are divided into three main areas of discussion:

a) Presentation of topic by instructor (see topics below)
b) Materials critique led by participant
c) Case study of home-school situation, followed by problem-solving consultation

COURSE TOPICS:

Why a school-community partnership? National issues. Home-school-community tensions today.

Job of the home in the education of the child: what research tells us.

Job of the school with parents: parent accountability, major anxieties of parents and teachers.

Home-school conferences; Report Cards; Home Work

The Home Curriculum: The Creative Parent-Success for Children (HSI) course Design of home teaching activities.

Parents IN the school: Volunteers and Paraprofessionals (and just plain visitors).

What other schools are doing: school innovations in parent involvement.

Designing materials to put the school's message across.

Final plan/proposal paper/and discussion of final papers within seminar to share ideas.

PLAN B: The Five-Step Home and School Institute Workshop

(Time: Typical two to three day in-service program)

1) Assessment of Participant Needs: preliminary session (usually one to two hours) with representatives of group to be attending workshop: parents, teachers, administrators, etc.. Sample agenda discussed; specific plan developed for this particular group.

2) Overview of Home-School-Community Scene Today: (approximately one to two hours): Topics addressed include research, current situations, major innovative projects, etc., highlights from Institute's Schools and Parent-Community Involvement course.

3) Specific Problem Areas: Case studies, role playing--bringing the overview close to home. Strong participant involvement. (approx. two hours)

4) Development of a Product: Participants work in teams to develop materials their schools need: perhaps a compilation of home-school-community activities, perhaps a beginning plan for parent-school involvement, etc.. (Approx. two to three hours) These materials are then discussed in the total group. The idea is to put talk into real action to be carried back to the schools.

5) Follow-up and Evaluation: developed by participants to indicate steps to be taken after this workshop, planning for future activities and assessment steps along the way. (approx. one hour)

PLAN C: Home and School Workshop

(Time: One in-service day)

Discussion Points: Participants select major areas of interest for discussion.

1) The school's work for the child

   Goals of schooling: broad? narrow?
   Expectations/tensions about the schools today

2) The home's work re the education of the child.

Parents as teachers

3) Research: what we're learning today about parents and the home as the major educational institution in society.

4) The school's work with parents

Doubts of teachers and parents

Rights of parents
Help and support parents can realistically expect of schools

Teachers' expectations of parents
Help and support teachers can realistically expect of parents

Role of the administrator

5) The current situation: ways in which home and school work well together now. Areas in which improvement is needed.

6) Steps towards a better home-school partnership

P-TA: any changes?
Communication from school: kinds of information parents want and need

Volunteer programs? other parent involvement?
Home visits?

In-service training for teachers/what kinds?
training for parents/what kinds?

Conferences
Hot issues: homework, report cards, achievement tests

BASIC GOALS OF HSI PROGRAMS AND EXAMPLES OF PARTICIPANT COMPETENCIES THAT WILL BE DEVELOPED:

1) <u>To improve the skills and attitudes of participants in working with parents and the community</u>: they will learn how to set up a year-long home-school-community program; included in this will be problem-solving typical home-school conflicts and the how-to's of conducting effective interviews and conferences.

2) <u>To provide parent reinforcement of children's learning</u>: participants will develop the ability to recruit parents as educational partners: to design home-teaching activities and to interest and show parents how to use these activities with children at home.

3) <u>To build more supportive community-school relationships</u>: participants will have practice in setting up and developing community information and advisory meetings: setting up a school communications approach, including newsletters and other explanatory material pertaining to school policies and teaching

approaches: participants will also learn how to work with school volunteers and paraprofessionals.

4) To design and disseminate tested materials that can be of use to other schools: participants will have practice in preparing readable and informative materials for the community they work with and for other teachers describing their work. The material will be tested in real-life school situations. Those that are found useful can be more widely disseminated.

EVALUATION OF THE HSI PROGRAMS BASED ON THE OBJECTIVES:

1) Improved skills and attitudes of teachers/principals: Can be evaluated by:

   a) Pre and post teacher attitude tests.
   b) Random sampling of parents reached by project: questionnaire, interview.
   c) Development of programs and materials for each school.

2) Parent reinforcement of children's learning:

   a) On home teaching activities:
      Check list for parents to indicate whether they were informed about activities, whether they tried them, and how they worked.

      Check list for teachers on number and type of activities they shared with parents and approximately how well the procedure worked.

      Random evaluation sampling of the activities themselves by parents: how good were the ones designed for them by the instructor?

3) More supportive community-school relationships:

   a) Numbers of and attendance by community at various school meetings
   b) Attitudes questionnaire, random sampling, pre and post project, of project participants and parents affected.

4) Design and dissemination of materials and home-school approach:

   a) The actual production of materials related to the training of professionals for home-school-community work which have been developed and tried.
   b) Evidence of workshops, participation at conferences, etc. by the project participants.
   c) Evidence of dissemination of in-service training to others who have not themselves taken part in the HSI training by those who have.

Related Institute Programs and Publications:

HOME AND SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE NOW:

The Liberated Parents' Guide To

SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN: a sampler of teaching ideas for parents, including

reading, writing and arithmetic for home use, drawn from the Institute's Creative Parent program. $1.50. approx. 60 activities; listed by the US Office of Child Development HOME START program.

THINKING CURRICULUM LAB: Teaching ideas and materials for parents and teachers interested in helping children learn how to use their heads creatively, drawn from the Creative Parent course. $2.00 ea. Helping children learn how to think more effectively is the core of the parent program.

TEN TIPS FOR SCHOOL PEOPLE WORKING WITH PARENTS: TEN TIPS FOR PARENTS WORKING WITH THE SCHOOL: poster-reminders points $1.00 ea.

For other materials and notice of booklets soon to be available, contact The Home and School Institute office, Box 4847, Cleveland Park, Washington, D.C..

*LECTURE-WORKSHOPS (Details on Request)
Parent Involvement in Practice
Parent Power: A Home Start for Every Child
Teacher Power: Working with Parents and Community
Home and School In Conflict?
The Second R: Why Johnny and Jane Can't Write and Ways to Help

Recent Workshops: 1972-1973

National Assn. for the Education of Young Children, national conference Nov 1972
"The Parent As Teacher: The School Can't Do It Alone"
Assn. for Childhood Education, Montgomery County, Md.
Advisory and Learning Exchange, Washington, D.C.
Maryland Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools
The University of South Florida, Tampa
The Career Opportunities Program of the Albuquerque, N.M. public schools

Vitae and publications of Director and staff are available also on request.

BUDGET: Costs for these programs will be negotiated between HSI and interested schools or school systems based on amount of consultant time and travel entailed, administrative needs on site, including supportive staff and materials.

HSI, a non-profit, tax-exempt educational corporation, attempts in all ways to keep costs moderate in order to communicate as widely as possible the message and techniques of home-school-community educational partnership.

For more specific information: contact the HSI office: 202-362-9066

Parents are the vital link in the educational process. Today, as more and more school doors open to parents, a turning point in American education may be upon us leading to constructive parent involvement with the schools.

The results of a recent Gallup Poll reveal that turning point may be staring educators in the face right now! Gallup and IDEA (the Kettering Foundation's Institute for the Development of Educational Activities) asked adults around the country this question:

When some children do poorly in school, some people place the blame on the children, some on the children's home life, and some on the teachers. Of course, all of these things share the blame, but where would you place the CHIEF blame?

The answer given by the highest percentage of interviewees was THE CHILD'S HOME LIFE. Only 6% blamed the schools. That finding may sound as if the public is absolving the schools, but not so fast.

What the public is really asking for is a new kind of school responsibility, reaching out to parents. A suggestion was made in the poll that parents of school children attend one evening a month to find out what they can do at home to improve their child in school. 80% of the parents said this was a good idea, one they want implemented.

Says Gallup: "This very impressive per cent reveals a growing recognition of the role of parents in education and the need for a new kind of partnership between teachers and parents."

BACKGROUND ON PROJECT DEVELOPER-DIRECTOR: Dorothy Rich, president of The Home and School Institute, is the developer-instructor of the School and Parent-Community Involvement course taught first at Catholic University and then at Trinity College. Mrs. Rich, currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration at Catholic Univ., has been a teacher on all levels, pre-school to graduate courses, since 1957. She is a panel member and consultant for the National Leadership Training Institute in Early Childhood Education (a teacher training project of the USOE) and a teacher educator also at the Univ. of Virginia. Mrs. Rich originated the Home and School column for The Washington Post (1964-1970) and The Creative Parent course. She is the winner of three awards for writing in education.